

Haunted Eyes

by Jilly-chan

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Summary: Hilde encounters Duo, Trowa, Heero and others in a world without Gundams and, often, without hope for redemption. 2xH, 1xH, 3x4 (sort of)

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>(Disclaimer: I do not own the Gundam Wing boys,
in fact, I don't know if their original creators

>would even recognize them beyond their names in
this alternate reality fic. But, I credit them

>for thinking up wonderful characters to toy with.
Expect the guys to be slightly OOC for creative

>purposes. For one of my fics, this is sort of
darkâ€"beware I'm toying with angst.)

>
We hadn't planned on them catching us this

>quickly. And after I tasted blood for the second
time that evening, I passed out.

>
Duo tells me not to go with his eyes. He calls me

>stupid and pulls my arm and then reminds me that he
only cares about me. I'm convinced he mostly cares if

>I cook, that's why he doesn't like me running off with
Heero and his ruffians.

>
"I don't like this." Duo would frown and chew on

>his lower lip in worry. I do that, chew on my
lip. I'm pretty sure he picked up that habit from

>taking care of me these past few years. And then
I met Heero, and I was perfectly willing to let

>Heero take care of me now. But I knew I'd miss
Duo then.

>
Now I'm sitting in a dark room. It could be small

>or it could be a gigantic cavern. All I know it
that it's as dark as tar. As thick as tar. And I

>can hear someone breathing all ragged like each
molecule of air

is being twisted through a maze of
>jagged caves. The oxygen being broken and beaten
against the
rocks before passing through the
>proper tunnels.

>I'm a stupid girl. Duo was right.

>The city was big enough to swallow a girl my age.
In fact,
several girls my age were gobbled up by
>one thing or another. Prostitution, a cheap job,
death. Heck,
they were all the same to me. Until
>Duo Maxwell picked me out of my best job ever as a
truck stop
waitress and put me on the train to
>straight living.

>"What's your name?" He asked me as I poured his
second cup of
java that morning. It was morning
>rather than night by maybe two hours.

>"Hilde, sugah." I stopped pouring the tar thick
liquid just shy
of spilling it over the brim.
>Duo's like that, he'll get you distracted all real
quick and easy
like. I tried not to seem as
>interested in him as I felt. He had this caramel
or toffee
colored hair. I thought of sticky foods
>because I thought of how nice it would be to run
my fingers
through them until they were real stuck
>and he'd have to take me with him where ever he
went.
>
And his eyes were so blue I was almost knocked
>over by them, but my hands were stuck in his hair
remember? Or I
wanted them to be. But when those
>eyes lingered just a moment longer than even the
most persistent
of trucker's longing gazes I
>realized that he wasn't interested in a romp or in
letting me
whittle my fingers through his hair.
>His eyes were haunted.

>I might have been a ghost to him.

>"Hilde." He repeated, and turned to look deep
into his java
instead of peering at me with those
>creepy eyes. Not that he was creepy, mind you.
Just that he was
haunted by something terrible.
>And of course, I reminded him of that ghastly
image that those
eyes had seen before.
>
Of course, I didn't know that at the time, but I
>knew better than to be scared of him when I got
off my shift and
saw that he had parked his semi
>next to my bicycle.

>It was sort of funny. I had stolen this little
bike from a
grocery store parking lot so that I
>didn't have to walk to work any more. Guys can't
grab you as easy
if you have some sort of wheels
>to carry you faster and farther. And here my
stolen little
bicycle was chained up to the light
>post. And Duo Maxwell was leaning up against the
same pole,
twirling the keys to his truck around
>one finger.

>He was whistling as I came up, and, when he turned
toward my
approaching footsteps, the gaze he
>beamed on me wasn't with those haunted eyes. It
was with genuine
affection--if two cups of coffee
>and a generous tip can bring about anything
genuine between
people.
>
He offered to take me away, and I said yes.
>
I don't know what I was imagining, but I never

>expected Duo Maxwell. Oh yeah, he told me his
>name as we drove through the rest of the dark
>morning and into the dawn. It was like we were
>driving into the fire of our future. I was the
>rescued girl and my knight was taking me off to
>the castle for the stuff that came after the
>credits roll in the movie.
>I didn't get what I was expecting. Not that what
>I got was bad. I got a bed and my own room. I
>got a chance to cook and then I realized that was
>the way Duo expected me to earn my stay. Not that
>cooking is hard or unreasonable. It wasn't even
>that he was sexist. Duo just couldn't cook, and
>neither could his roommate.
>Trowa Barton was nice enough and just way too
>thin. Even when I started cooking enough for a
>small army and made sure Trowa ate his fair share-
>nothing grew on that fellow. It troubled me.
>Something else was making Trowa sick. And his
>eyes were always haunted.
>We lived in this small house on the corner of a
>neighborhood that was too poor to start trouble
>and too smart to bring any home with them. Duo
>and Trowa were good examples of the sort that
>lived there. They all had some sort of captured
>life that they sheltered in a small shell of grey
>flesh and bones. Like a community of hidden
>rainbows, only the rainbows weren't allowed out
>even when the raining was over.
>I suppose I belonged there too, and that's why Duo
>brought me.
>Things went well enough for us. Duo was the
>liveliest of us all. His grey flesh almost looked
>golden in the sunlight. "Hello. Hello." he
>would wave at all the neighbors and they would
>wave back. Everything was alright.
>He even got Trowa to laugh once. I can't remember
>what the joke was and I can't remember what his
>laugh sounded like, but it happened. I wrote it
>down on the calendar.
>Duo had kept the same calendar for years by simply
>reusing it over and over again. He really had no
>confidence about the date other than what day of
>the week it was, but it was how he managed to keep
>a concept of time in the blur of living. I had to
>admit it beat carving notches in the tree or in
>the corner of my kitchen. Besides, he had the
>good fortune of recycling a calendar with pictures
>of various beaches around the world. Year after
>year it would seem like we had a chance to visit
>them all in their proper season.
>Year after year. That stupid calendar over and
>over again. I must have seen it seven times. I
>must have lived in that time loop with them for
>seven years. And that stupid calendar was the
>only way I had of telling.
>Seven years and we didn't get any closer really
>and I didn't learn why Duo's sweet hair was so
>long or why Trowa's pants came out of the laundry
>looking like twin toothpicks. I guess I could
>have asked. But I

wasn't smart, remember?

>
They didn't ask me to do anything but cook while
>Duo drove his truck and Trowa went by train into
the city to work
for the factory. Doing the
>laundry was just something nice I suggested to
fill the boring
hours between Trowa's shifts and
>Duo's weekend trips.

>And then I wondered why I was caging my sparks of
life. I was
going to leave this ho-hum living and
>earn some adventures. I couldn't believe I had
sat through that
calendar as long as I had. So I
>left a note and disappeared.

>I figured they wouldn't starve. Duo could always
shoot down
another waitress with those blue canons
>he called eyes. So why was I leaving? A girl
gets bored, y'know.

>
I was gone for a week. I shacked up with a guy
>from up north who thought that I was cute enough.
It sort of was
insulting, so I started back to
>Duo. He'd let me come back, I was sure.

>It was when my bicycle was stolen from me that I
started
hitchhiking. And that's when I met Heero
>Yuy. He was a tight-lipped Japanese punk. He
wasn't into anything
or part of anything, but
>isolated and in himself, Heero Yuy was a country.
"I am a rock.
I am an island. Heero Yuy."
>
He might have been tight-lipped but that didn't
>keep him from sharing his dreams of becoming a
world leader. He
was ambitious. The terrible
>sweet flavor of his politics were like a melody of
bitter
chocolates.
>
I don't remember what he said as much as that
>whatever he said melted my heart. I loved him.

>He must have loved me because he drove me all the
way up to Duo
Maxwell's front door. On the grass,
>I mean. That's either service or some sort of
macho competition.

>
Duo managed to meander onto the porch and examine
>the damage to his lawn. He had this easy going
smile on his face,
one that barely betrayed the
>anxiety he must have felt for having his solace
broken. "Oi,
Hilde. You cut your hair."
>
I was beginning a new life I thought. Nothing
>completes that like a haircut. I was an all or
nothing kind of
girl. I didn't have any hair
>anymore. But, why had I come back to Duo?

>"Maxwell." Heero snarled the name I had shared
with him. It
wasn't aggressive and I think all of
>us knew that. It was just how Heero communicated
when he wasn't
chewing his ambitious cud. Snarls,
>growls, and other primal indications of life
unleashed from it's
domestic cages.
>
His hair was ill kept except for the growing wind
>that wound it up in its invisible fingers and
seemed to want to
untangle it. It pulled up from
>two brilliant eyes. Both of which, I saw in a
flash, we just as
blue as Duo's that first day I
>met him. But then they were gone and he was the
flashing and
energetic creature that hypnotized my
>spirit. Heero was magnetic.

>And he pulled Duo toward him.

>I wanted to watch, but I felt compelled to go into
the house
instead. Perhaps my attraction to Duo
>was stronger than I thought it was. A drifting
piece of metal
never knows where she'll end up.
>
Trowa was resting on the couch with a worn green
>cloth covering his eyes and half of his face. One
pencil arm hung
off the edge of his resting place
>and brushed across the floor with a gentle stroke.

>
"Trowa?" I asked then, a bit nervous.
>
"Is that you, Hilde?" he asked. I had the
>feeling he knew it was me before I said his name,
before he
recognized my voice, before Duo told him
>who was coming up by the window. Trowa had this
perception about
him that seemed like the most
>amplified of his characteristics.

>I said as much, "You're so perceptive, Trowa."

>He pulled his narrow form together and shuddered.
"No." He
whispered.
>
I watched his lip pull down into the saddest
>expression I've ever seen. I loved Trowa then and
rushed to his
side. "Don't cry, Trowa, no. No.
>No tears for Trowa. He's okay."

>I'm really bad at the comforting thing. But his
visible lips
straightened into their regular
>solemn arches. Now he lacked everything, even
sorrow.

>
"You've got me, Trowa." I tried again.
>"Remember, Hilde who cooks and cleans? I left for
a while, but
now I'm bored again and want to take
>care of you."

>"He needs people to stay with him." Duo murmured
behind me. He
must have come back in while I
>fretted over Trowa's sudden depression. "Enough
people have left
him as it is."
>
"What's that?" I asked, I hadn't quite forgotten
>about Heero Yuy and wondered why he hadn't come in
as well. I had
told him that he'd be welcome to
>stay with me in my room even if the boys were a
little frustrated
at first.
>
"Tell her." Trowa's voice came out of the small
>mouth with so few emotions. With the towel draped
over his eyes,
it was the only expression of which
>Trowa was capable.

>Duo's eyes looked hurt now. More sorrow than he
could contain in
those illuminating objects. I
>pulled my heart back to safety and was ready to
hear anything.

>
They told me about how they had met as young boys
>in a small gang in a city far away. It was a
rather low key
organization that let youngsters
>tag along if they wanted. Trowa and Duo had both
been orphaned by
some way or another. Duo had left
>his foster home and Trowa had come home from school
to find his
house empty. The story didn't explain
>either situation very well.

>Then, Trowa had some sort of fancy for the son of a
traveling
parson. I wasn't sure exactly how
>Trowa had an affection for this blond Quatre, but
during the

story I could hear him breathe, "my angel,
>my angel." Or something like that. The whole thing
got rather
confused and muddled when Trowa wanted to
>go with Quatre to the next stop on their circuit.
Another punk in
the street family decided to mess up
>Quatre's pretty face instead of letting Trowa and
Duo go with
him. Quatre had been killed and
>somehow immortalized in Trowa's confused thinking.
Dead people
seem to have a way about getting more
>and more beautiful to their loved ones. It's
either that or
they're simply forgotten.
>
Trowa had refused to believe that his angel could
>be destroyed and murdered a few people who were
responsible.

>
I simply listened. I was ready for anything.
>
No wonder Trowa was sick all the time. He wasn't
>the sort that should be killing people. Here he
killed a handful
of bad ones years ago and he
>would never forgive himself.

>His lips never moved. For all I knew, Trowa was
dead himself.

>
"Ok." I said, feeling leftover sassy but trying to
>let my genuine sympathy slip out. "I know, something
in
everyone's past seems like an awful dream. And
>then you remember it's real." I wanted to scream
something like
"Life continues! Live already!" but
>what came out was something like, "I'm back for
good. Can I cook
you something special, Trowa
>love?"

>I'm not perfect, so I'm not going to tell someone
else what to
do.
>
Trowa was haunted by a blond angel who died over
>seven years ago. So be it. It meant that he had
had something
worth having once in his life.
>Something worth missing that much. I wondered
what that felt
like.
>
More blood in my mouth. It tastes like a thick
>brew to get drunk on, to pass out with, but it
makes me horribly
awake right now. Nothing's
>where it belongs anymore.

>I heard Trowa's story and knew why he looks like
Gumby sideways.
His clothes loosely hanging on him
>like they looked on the hanger. He was
practically invisible, but
we saw him. And Duo
>could make him laugh.

>Our neighbor came over then. His name was
Wufei
Something-or-other and he sometimes barbequed with
>us on the back porch. Duo likes porches. He
build one on the
front with a screen, an open one
>on the back, and a small deck off his own room.
He said he liked
to have partial access to nature
>while still remaining in some sort of community
with the
civilization of the house. I said he was
>stupid, but I liked the porch swing he had picked
up in the week
that I was gone. I wondered if he
>was planning to sit out there on it and watch for me
to come
home.
>
Wufei wasn't interested in porches more than they
>were how he got to knock at the front door. He
wasn't happy.

>
"You need help, Maxwell?" he offered with some
>spicy aggravation, "Who's tearing up your property
now?" He
glanced at me, I don't think he was
>suggesting that I was bad news, maybe he had just
noticed that I
was back again.
>
Duo laughed easily, you wouldn't believe that he
>had just told his best friend's entire life story
that included a
dark vision of a painful history.
>Trowa had sat up and nodded to Wufei in greeting.
I took a
moment to appreciate seeing his salty
>olive eyes. He might have been crying, or maybe
the damp rag had
been easing a completely
>different irritation.

>"Is that a 'no'?" Wufei shrugged and slipped past
Duo and into
the front room. It was darker now
>and the sun must have been sinking itself while we
spoke in
memorial of a distant angel.
>
The Chinese man sat at the end of the couch when Trowa
>curled up his splintery legs. "You cut your hair,
Hilde." our
neighbor observed.
>
I slid my hand against the smooth scalp. I didn't
>miss it. But I had missed something, hadn't I?
"Don't worry,
Wufei. I'm going to tattoo something
>*brilliant* over this shiny globe." I teased.

>Wufei didn't appreciate my idea of humor. I think
Duo laughed to
be polite. "Like what?" Wufei
>baited me, or maybe he was just trying to do his
part to fill in
the conversation.
>
"I dunno." I waltzed around the room, three
>pairs of eyes followed my jerky movements.
Haunted eyes, dark
eyes, and curiously alive eyes.
>I was sure Wufei had his own share of secrets if
he would visit
these two crazy guys. Anyone who
>spent any time with Duo and Trowa had to be crazy.

>I also felt a bit put off suddenly. "I might have
the face of my
darling tattooed on there."
>
"Maxwell's mug on yo. . ." Wufei started when he
>recognized the words that I had spoken at the same
time.

>
"Heero Yuy."
>
When Wufei stopped talking mid-thought, I made the
>sinking connection that Duo had been talking to
Heero. That Duo
had been having words with Heero
>outside all along. While I had worried over
Trowa's thin lips,
Duo had been outside. The
>entire time. Alone. Not alone, with Heero.

>If I hadn't cut my hair, none of this would have
happened. If I
hadn't wanted the grass on the
>other side of the fence to munch on, maybe I would
have stayed to
cook for my boys. If I hadn't been
>born a complete fool, maybe I would have lived my
life
differently. My favorite word is "if."
>
In a careless phrase I had accidentally, and
>Almost completely , replaced my darling knight who had
carried
me off in his truck from the dark castle of
>the city and into the forest of this junkyard
definition of a
suburb.
>
Duo is more forgiving than anyone I know.
>
And I don't put the pieces of my life together
>until I'm sitting in the pitch black waters of
near silence, with

blood I can taste in my mouth,
>and the tragic whispers of someone who doesn't
much enjoy
breathing and still is hanging on to life.
>
I thought all he wanted was a cook. And he was
>simply never asking me to give more than I was
willing. I was the
one who insisted on being
>nothing more than a cook. I was the one who
didn't care.

>
Now I care.

>
But then I felt torn between sneering and crying
>as Duo calmly told me that Heero Yuy was a gang
member who they
had fled from all those years ago
>when Trowa had lost his precious golden Quatre.
They didn't
deserve this sort of action in their
>life, and they were warning me away from the one
most alive and
fascinating man I had ever met.
>
Heero was controlled passion. He was collected
>humanity in one vessel. He had none of the
depressing angst that
these three fellows carried
>like garbage.

>*Memories, Hilde.* I tell myself as I hear a
shuffling of feet
that seem miles away, down the
>track, and right next to me. *They carried
treasured memories
that slipped through those
>haunted eyes like jeweled tears.*

>A light slips under the crack of a door that opens
in and toward
where I sit. I rub at my jaw and
>feel the slick of blood. It reminds me of the
slick of my bare
head. I wished I could have

>Duo's braid to cover my brash spirit.

>I glance over to see that Heero is hurt much worse
than I
imagined. His eyes are forever squeezed

>shut in sorrow. And I know, he has memories too.
A wealth of
memories that he's buried deeper than

>anyone else.

>I began to suspect Heero was trapped too. I left
again. I left
after I had promised Trowa. I had

>left after I had danced my jerky waltz to the tune
of Heero Yuy's
name which was tattooed on my brain

>anyway.

>I was a crazy girl.

>I left after Duo had forgiven my outburst. I
left after he had
forgiven me for betraying where

>they had lived safely and in comfort and with
porches for years
and years. I left after Duo had

>bought me a plane ticket to go with them to where
ever they were
going to go next.

>
Why did I leave, you ask? Well, Heero came back.

>He tapped on my window and gave me his devilish
grin and had
whispered to me of flavored delights

>as I had never imagined. Heero pampered the
carnal delights of my
smallest senses. While Duo

>made me feel like behaving, Heero made me like the
way I wanted
to behave.

>
I should have known better when we were speeding

>away from the confining grasp of Duo's
neighborhood and his
waiting porch swing. I asked

>him what he and Duo had talked about on the lawn.
And, even
while he didn't look at me, I knew that

>Heero's eyes had grown haunted. Deep down, those
blue eyes were

hiding their own salt tears.

>
Now I cry tears.

>
They mingle with the blood I earned that day. The
>blood that spills onto my hands with the fresh
rivers of tears.
My eyes are haunted, I can tell.

>
I'm being set free once again.

>
My angel has come.

>
Duo had found me. He had opened the door. I
>barely dared to believe it. Why had he found me?
"my angel my
angel" I mutter stupidly.

>
"Hilde? Heero?" his voice is light in volume,
>but carried with a quick tension from strain.

>I don't know how he knew. I don't know how he
found me. My angel.

>
Heero and I had been partners in petty crime for a
>short while before we finally saved enough to buy
an apartment in
the city. The one up north that
>called to me every day since I left that truck
stop with Duo. For
every humble responsibility
>that Duo had fostered in me, Heero had replaced it
with a wild
girl's joy.

>
I don't know who came after us, but they were in
>before I could say a word. Heero was leaving the
gang, but not
the lifestyle. It must have made us
>easier to locate.

>Leaving must have been what Heero was trying to
learn from Duo
that evening on the lawn, but we
>had both refused to learn from Duo's successes.
We were afraid
of the process I guess. We were
>afraid of facing the tears that Trowa could find
refuge in. We
were afraid of balancing our
>passions with civilization like Duo's fascination
with porches.

>
I remember hurting, but never as much physically
>as I hurt emotionally watching my barbaric knight
fighting on my
behalf. I had given up my champion
>in a clunkish truck for a wild soldier with sharp
knives. Knives
that brought trouble.

>
Heero tried, we were just leading each other
>around in circles while with reassuring glances
telling each
other that we were fine as we were.
>No need to change anything. Nope. We were
unhinged, uncaged, wild
children.

>
My angel came and brushed away my tears. He swept
>away my broken heart with that motion. And he
took us away.

>
He took us back to Trowa who might not have been
>as thin as I remembered. His lips curled up more
often than down.

>
Heero lived. And our relationship changed. His
>violent politics subsided and were replaced by a
peaceful silence
without excuses.

>
And I gave up on that stupid tattoo. My hair grows
>back so slowly, but it does grow back. I might
even sit on the
porch and watch the haunted glow
>of the sun set for a new day to begin.

>

>(wellâ€"how's that for something different? Let me know
at
stormy812@hotmail.com or at the message board for

>Lt. Noin's Guide to Gundam Wing:

<http://www.ltnoinsguidetogw.mainpage.net> Thanks!)

>

>

> <p><p>

End
file.